

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00

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FM AMEMBASSY LISBON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7913

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MADRID

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMCONSUL OPORTO

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMCONSUL PONTA DELGADA

USMISSION NATO

DIA WASHDC

USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER

C O N F I D E N T I A L LISBON 4892

E.O. 11652: GDS

SUBJECT: POLITICAL-MILITARY DEVELOPMENTS: ROCHA VIEIRA

SWORN-IN AS ARMY CHIEF

REF: LISBON 4783 (DTG 151722Z JUL 76)

SUMMARY: GEN ROCHA VIEIRA WAS SWORN-IN AS ARMY CHIEF JULY 19.
GEN EANES, WHOSE PRESENCE SIGNALLED HIS SUPPORT FOR VIEIRA AND
CONTINUED PERSONAL INVOLVEMENT IN ARMY RESTRUCTURING, WARNED
THAT ANY ATTEMPTS TO MANIPULATE TROOPS WILL NOT BE TOLERATED.
VIEIRA PROMISED TO DEVOTE SPECIAL ATTENTION TO ARMY RESTRUCTURING
AND THE ORGANIZATION OF FORCES TO MEET INTERNATIONAL COMMITMENTS.
END SUMMARY

1. NEW ARMY CHIEF: GEN VASCO ROCHA VIEIRA, AGE 36, WAS SWORN-IN
JULY 20 AS ARMY CHIEF OF STAFF. PRESIDENT EANES PRESIDED
OVER THE CEREMONY WHICH WAS ATTENDED BY THE OTHER SERVICE CHIEF,
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MOST OF REVOLUTIONARY COUNCIL, AND OTHER SENIOR MILITARY OFFICERS.

HIGHLIGHTS OF REMARKS MADE BY GEN EANES FOLLOW:

- THE FUNDAMENTAL OBJECTIVE OF THE ARMY IS TO GUARANTEE THE STATE OF LAW AND THE OPENING OF THE PATH TOWARD SOCIALISM.
- HIERARCHY AND DISCIPLINE IN THE ARMY HAVE NOT YET REACHED THE DESIRED LEVEL;
- PRIOR TO NOVEMBER, 1975, THE ARMY HAD THREATENED TO BECOME A GROUP OF SMALL FACTIONS DOMINATED BY INDIVIDUAL CHIEFS AND FEUDALIZED BY POLITICAL PARTIES;
- THE ARMED FORCES ARE RIGOROUSLY NON-PARTISAN, AND ARE COMMITTED TO MAINTAINING COHESION AND DISCIPLINE;
- ATTEMPTS TO MANIPULATE SOLDIERS OR UNITS WILL NOT BE TOLERATED;
- INSURRECTIONAL ACTIVITIES WILL BE WIPED OUT;
- NO COMPROMISES OR HALF-WAY MEASURES SHOULD BE ACCEPTED BY THE ARMY CHIEF;
- THE REORGANIZATION OF THE ARMY REQUIRES PREFERENTIAL ATTENTION TO INSTRUCTION, ADMINISTRATION OF PERSONNEL, AND DECENTRALIZATION OF UNITS.

2. ROCHA VIEIRA RESPONSE: ROCHA VIEIRA RESPONDED MAKING THE FOLLOWING POINTS:

- THERE IS NO ROOM FOR CONSPIRATORS WITHIN THE MILITARY;
- GIVEN NATIONAL REALITIES AND AVAILABLE FUNDS, SPECIAL ATTENTION WILL BE DEVOTED TO RESTRUCTURING THE UPPER LEVELS OF THE ARMY AND TO REORGANIZATION AND NUMBER OF UNITS;
- EFFICIENT MANAGEMENT AND CAREER DEVELOPMENT WILL RECEIVE PRIORITY ATTENTION;
- THE ORGANIZATION OF EFFECTIVE FORCES TO MEET INTERNATIONAL COMMITMENTS AND TO CONTRIBUTE VISIBLY TO THE MODERNIZATION OF THE ARMY IS A MAJOR TASK;
- THE REALIZATION OF THE ABOVE TASKS WILL ONLY BE ACHIEVED THROUGH CONSOLIDATION AND DISCIPLINE WHICH MUST BE DEVELOPED WITH UNDERSTANDING BUT UNWAVERING FIRMNESS.

3. SOARES CONSULTATIONS: SOCIALIST LEADER MARIO SOARES ON JULY 19 CONSULTED WITH CDS, PCP, AND UDP LEADERS. HE MEETS WITH PPD AND UNION LEADERS JULY 20; THEN TRAVELS TO OPORTO JULY 21 FOR FURTHER TALKS. THE FAR-LEFT UDP STATED IT COULD ACCEPT A PS GOVERNMENT, WHILE THE PCP CONTINUED TO OPPOSE A SOCIALIST GOVERNMENT WITHOUT COMMUNIST PARTICIPATION.

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CDS VICE PRESIDENT AMARO DA COSTA TOLD PRESS JULY 19 THAT THE CDS WOULD NOT VOTE AGAINST THE PS PROGRAM. SINCE REJECTION OF THE PROGRAM REQUIRES A MAJORITY OF ELIGIBLE DEPUTIES, CDS ABSTENTIONS COMBINED WITH PS VOTES ASSURES THAT ANY MOTION TO REJECT WOULD FAIL.

4. COMMENT: SIGNIFICANTLY, ROCHA VIEIRA INCLUDED THE ORGANIZATION OF THE ARMY TO MEET NATO COMMITMENTS AND ARMY

MODERNIZATION AMONG HIS PRIMARY GOALS. THE PARTICIPATION OF
GEN EANES A CLOSE PERSONAL FRIEND OF VIEIRA, AND OTHER RANKING
OFFICERS IN THE SWEARING-IN CEREMONY WAS INTENDED AS A SHOW
OF SUPPORT FOR THE NEW ARMY CHIEF. EANES'S TOUGH WORDS
REGARDING MILITARY INDISCIPLINE AND INSURRECTION BRING HOME THE
MESSAGE THAT THERE WILL BE NO RELAXATION OF HIS EFFORT TO REBUILD
MILITARY COHESION, AND THAT EANES WILL RETAIN AN ACTIVE ROLE IN
OVERSEEING THE ARMY FROM HIS NEW POST AS PRESIDENT AND ARMED
FORCES CHIEF OF STAFF.
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